

S2

a play

by Edward Mast

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CHARACTERS

The play can be done by 6, 7, 8 or more actors. Groupings below represent suggested doubling for a cast of 5 males and 3 females.

1. Slate
2. Pita
Woman (TV)
Student
Teenager
Passenger
Goods
3. Nicky
Teenager
Passenger
Soldier #1
Goods
Cub Scout
4. Terry
Student
Passenger
Chinge
Cub Scout
Goods
5. Lewis
Student
Teenager
Passenger
Soldier #2
Cub Scout
Goods
6. John
Steward
Man (Boss)
Director
Voice
7. Teacher
Mom
Rosalya
Model
Mother
8. Diana
Passenger
Goods

PRODUCTION NOTES

Bare stage. Wooden chairs. No realistic sets; all settings created as if by improvisation. Props and costumes realistic or suggestive as necessary.

Teenagers in the play need not be played by teenage actors. Some distinction between adult and teenage characters might be useful, but need not be realistic. Teenage characters in the play could be played by young-looking adults, or by real teenagers; *or* adult and teenage characters could be distinguished by presentational means: adults all wearing elevated shoes and extended hands, for example.

ACT ONE

(Slate in one chair. 14 years old.
No shirt. Pants and open vest of black or military
camouflage.)

In a chair facing him, John. 35 years old. Light
tan suit. Attache case standing on floor beside
him.

Silence at first. John pulls out a pack of
cigarettes.)

Cigarette? JOHN

No thank you. SLATE

(John puts pack back into coat pocket. Gazes
at Slate.)

How old are you? JOHN

Fourteen. SLATE

Do you go to school? JOHN

No. SLATE

What do you do in the daytime? JOHN

(Slate shrugs.)

JOHN
Where do you live?

SLATE
Around.

JOHN
You do not live at home?

SLATE
Do you mean with some sort of parent?

JOHN
I suppose so.

SLATE
I do not live with a parent.

JOHN
Hm. How long ago did you leave?

SLATE
Leave my parents?

JOHN
Yes.

SLATE
They left me.

JOHN
Hm. Do you work at any sort of job?

(Slate stares at him, chuckles. John chuckles too.)

JOHN
Are you involved in drug trade?

SLATE
Occasionally.

JOHN
Do you use drugs yourself?

SLATE
No.

JOHN
Do they not feel good?

SLATE
Survival feels better.

JOHN
Hm. What do you do for amusement?

(Slate shrugs.)

JOHN
Do you have friends?

SLATE
Allies?

JOHN
Friends. Close friends.

SLATE
There are people with whom I sometimes enjoy myself.

JOHN
No one in particular?

SLATE
One perhaps in particular.

JOHN
Hm. (pause) Whom do you trust?

SLATE
In what way?

JOHN
Simply trust. Whom do you trust?

SLATE
My experience has shown me that no one is deserving of trust.

JOHN
No one at all?

SLATE
Attack can come from any direction.

JOHN
Hm. Do you carry weapons?

(Slate shrugs, chuckles. John nods. Pause.
He reaches out, touches Slate's face.)

JOHN
Your face is a beautiful thing.

(Strokes it. Slate stares at him.)

SLATE

What would you like me to do?

(John frowns stops stroking, takes hand away.
Stares at Slate.)

JOHN

You have never gone to school?

SLATE

At one time. I have studied on my own.

JOHN

How?

SLATE

Internet, plus mail order study from the back of graphic novels.

JOHN

Hm.

SLATE

Have you gone to school?

JOHN

(laughs)

Oh I have gone to very much school indeed. I am highly educated. I am at this time quite a commodity because of my education. (pause) Do you have relations with females?

SLATE

No.

JOHN

Why not?

SLATE

I choose not to.

JOHN

How old are you again?

SLATE

Fourteen.

JOHN

Fourteen. At that age are you able to achieve orgasm?

SLATE

Yes. Were you able to do so at that age?

JOHN

I don't remember.

SLATE

Hm. (pause) Are you able to do so at your present age?

JOHN

Oh yes. It is one of my chief delights.

SLATE

Do you have others?

JOHN

Oh yes.

(Pause. John reaches out, touches
Slate's bare chest with middle finger. Draws
tip of finger up and down Slate's breastbone.)

JOHN

What will you do when you are my age or older, and your skin is no longer smooth and tender?

SLATE

It is my plan to cross that bridge when I encounter it.

JOHN

Hm. Tell me this . . . what is your name?

SLATE

You may call me Slate.

JOHN

Is that your given name?

SLATE

It is what you may call me.

JOHN

Hm. Tell me this please, Slate: do you often find it necessary to lie in order to give pleasure?

SLATE

Never.

JOHN

Never?

SLATE

I only choose transactions which appeal to me personally.

JOHN

(smiles, still stroking him)

Oh that is a wonderful lie.

SLATE

How do you know it is a lie?

JOHN

I have encountered it before. To believe this lie to be truth is one of my chief delights.

(Offstage: a voice:)

VOICE

Bang.

(John stiffens; crumples; falls to the floor. As Slate leaps up enter Diana, a woman aiming a small semi-automatic assault weapon at him. He freezes as Diana steps forward, alert but calm. She is dressed in loose-fitting, functional black. Slate raises hands. Diana looks at him, smiles sweetly.)

DIANA

Two steps back please.

(Slate does so. Diana nods, squats beside the body. Nudges it with barrel of weapon. Stands, lifts attache case, sets it on chair; opens it just enough to peek inside. Sees what she wants. Lets go of case, turns to Slate.)

DIANA

I was going to watch, but I am in rather a hurry and he did talk so much. Like many scientists with heads of egg, he could never resist an attractive selection of anus. Like yourself. You are quite an attractive one. It is too bad. This head of egg should have delivered his invention, rather than delaying to indulge his orientation. He is now in Hell because of it. If he had preferred vaginas to anuses, you would be alive tomorrow to give orgasms to others, and perhaps to achieve orgasm yourself.

(strokes his face with gun barrel)

Perhaps you'd like to achieve one last orgasm?

(smiles, musing; then)

No; I think not. I have made my pickup, and now I must deliver this. You are in any case unclean and God frowns on you. Sorry to waste your potential in this manner and consign you to Hell.

(With a quick move, Slate knocks the weapon out of her hand.)

SLATE

Biff!

(Grabs her arm and flings her expertly over his shoulder. She is agile and bounces back up, but he delivers karate chops to the back of her neck--saying "Thock!" and "Puck!"--and knocks her out. He snatches up weapon. To us:)

SLATE

It is unfortunate for this woman that I have been studying martial arts via the internet for years.

(points weapon down at her; pauses; lifts weapon.
To us:)

SLATE

It is fortunate for this woman that I have never taken a life.

(hesitates; kicks her a little and gets no response.
Looks at attache case; goes to it, opens it.
The contents appear to glow. Slate is amazed.
Looks up.)

SLATE

There is one in particular . . . whom this will fill with joy.

(Closes case. Stands, with case and gun. Looks
at Diana on the floor; aims weapon at her again;
hesitates; then hides weapon in pants.)

SLATE

She does not know me from Adam, after all.

(Exit.
Lights dim.)

(Lights up.
Several rows of chairs are set up facing away from the audience, with students sitting with their backs to us. One stands facing them, toward us: the teacher. Teacher will mime blackboard behind him. Teacher stares calmly at students.)

TEACHER

Now then, you little vermin. You little rodents and dung of rodents. I realize it is futile, I do not know why I am here, I know you do not care the length of a rodent's penis for what I say, but nevertheless I will continue to draw my salary, such as it is, by persevering in my existential, doomed attempt to demonstrate to you one and all the manner in which you may calculate the hypotenuse of a right triangle. I will proceed slowly since I realize your ears are hollow canyons and your eyeballs are glazed with phlegm.

(He turns to write on blackboard.
Behind the last seats, enter Slate, rolling in silently across the floor so as not to be seen. He crouches unnoticed behind a seat as the Teacher turns back to the class.)

TEACHER

Can anyone identify this?

(Silence. Teacher laughs.)

TEACHER

Pardon me, but predictability is one my my few amusements. Of course none of you knows what this is. Do logs floating downstream know what a waterfall is? Does a fly know what a flyswatter is? Just for the solitary pleasure of having said it, let me point out that this is a right triangle, so named because of this angle here: ninety degrees. Not unlike a street corner. Now: for your further bewilderment, I have drawn each side to a specific length, and labeled it thus:

(pointing)

Can anyone read this number?

(A student raises hand.)

TEACHER

A light in the wilderness. Yes?

STUDENT

Three.

TEACHER

A prophet is risen. Stretch yourself to the limits of human intelligence and name this one as well.

(Writes; same student raises hand)

TEACHER

Yes yes.

STUDENT

Four.

TEACHER

I am humbled. The known universe bows to your brilliance. But now begins the complexity. Give me the currency of your attention, if you please.

(chuckles)

A funny notion, implying as it does that you possess attention to give.

(Turns to write.

Slate reaches up quickly, grabs the boy in the seat before him, jerks him out of the chair and onto the ground. All instant and silent. Slate holds the boy--Nicky--with hand over mouth, whispers Shhh! as Teacher turns back. Nicky freezes.)

TEACHER

Three times three is nine. This is called the square of three, or three squared. I know this calculation leaves you far behind, but try to sit back and let it wash over you like some grand Russian symphony.

(turns, writes)

SLATE

(whispering)

I need to see Lewis.

NICKY

(whispering)

Why?

SLATE

Where can I find him?

(Nicky starts to speak, but Teacher turns back and Slate clamps hand over Nicky's mouth.)

TEACHER

Four times four is sixteen. This is called the square of four. Contain your enthusiasm please. We are approaching the exciting climax.

(turns to write. Slate unclasps Nicky's mouth and they whisper urgently.)

SLATE

Where can I find him?

NICKY

Why do you need to--

SLATE

(threateningly)

It is important I speak with him.

NICKY

He is in algebra right now--

SLATE

No he is not. He is absent from school today.

NICKY

Then I am ignorant of his whereabouts--

(Slate grips Nicky's throat, but Teacher turns.
Nicky chokes throughout the following.)

TEACHER

Sixteen added to nine is . . .

(considers asking, but then:)

Oh let me not tax your already exhausted skull matter. Sixteen plus nine equals twenty-five.

(Writes it quickly as Slate whispers.)

SLATE

Where is he?

TEACHER

Twenty-five. Now twenty-five is the square of another number. Could it be three? No, three times three equals nine. Could it be four? No, four times four equals sixteen. What could it be? Not three, not four, but . . .

(Same student raises hand.)

TEACHER

Yes, my saviour, my cavalry coming to the rescue?

STUDENT

Five?

TEACHER

I weep with joy. You have shown me hope beyond hope. Five, yes, and five just so happens to be the length of the long side of this right triangle. Thus:

(turns to write. Slate ungrrips Nicky's throat.
Nicky gulps air.)

SLATE

Where is he?

NICKY
I do not know--

(Slate threatens.)

NICKY
But! But! He and I are to view a film this evening at seven o'clock.

SLATE
Where?

NICKY
The Urban.

SLATE
Good.

(Starts off, turns back)

SLATE
(darkly)
I hope you speak the truth.

(He heaves Nicky up into his chair, leaves
just as Teacher turns back.)

TEACHER
The square of side A plus the square of side B equals the square of the hypotenuse, side C.
And now, to fulfill my wildest imaginings, how many have understood this?

(Silence. Teacher smiles, nods.)

TEACHER
As I expected. However, I have carried out my responsibility and made this knowledge
available for your rejection; and if it is any comfort to you, I will laugh with glee at the wreck
you will make of this world when you are adults. You are the apocalypse, do you know that?
You are armageddon. You are the cloud of cleansing fire. You are the meaningless hopeless
useless end of evolution on this planet. You are already *in* that sightless, memoryless oblivion
into which your generation will finally lead us all. Tell me, is it easiness? Is it simplicity? Is it
bliss?

(Silence.)

TEACHER
Are there any questions?

(Lights dim.)

(Lights up.
Loud music: the cast vocally imitates hiphop, acid, rap, metal, or any other current popular party music. Several teenagers, all dressed in black, scanty, sexy clothes are dancing and partying. They all face us. Suddenly the music stops. All freeze, except one of the teenagers who steps forward and addresses us.)

TEENAGER

I like you. You're fun. Let's go home together.

(Leaves, with imagined customer. Music up; dancing. Music and dancing stop. Another steps forward.)

TEENAGER

You're funny. I like you. Let's go home together.

(Leaves with imagined customer. Music up; dancing. Music and dancing stop. Another teenager--a boy--steps forward.)

TEENAGER

You're special. Do you like me? Let's go home together.

(Enter Slate as he says this. Slate leaps in front of the boy, shouts at the imagined customer.)

SLATE

It is too bad for you, anus. Have intercourse with your hand instead. Slam!

(Slams a car door shut.)

TEENAGER

Wait--

(The imagined customer leaves, with Slate and the boy making screeching car noises. The boy--Terry--turns angrily to Slate.)

TERRY

What is your intention here? That was a transaction!

SLATE

Soon you will need no more transactions.

TERRY
Are you mentally unbalanced?

SLATE
I am sane.

TERRY
What do you mean no more transactions?

SLATE
No more ever.

TERRY
Why not?

SLATE
Because I will tell you why not. Would you like to join me at a moving picture tonight?

TERRY
You have destroyed a transaction for the purpose of inviting me to the movies?

SLATE
In essence.

TERRY
You are too young to be senile.

SLATE
At the movies will be Lewis. We must see Lewis.

TERRY
About what?

(Instead of answering, Slate lunges exuberantly at the air; does several martial-arts leaps and punches)

TERRY
Enough with your playstation practice. You are in possession of something that will interest Lewis?

SLATE
(still leaping about)
I am in possession of something that will make Lewis drool and howl and beg to be my friend.

TERRY
How did you come to this possession?

SLATE
(with one final leap)
I will tell you about it. And we will see Lewis. And you and I will possess houses and cars. And we will travel as we please. And ride first class on airplanes.

TERRY

Are you sure of this?

SLATE

We will see Shanghai and Tanganyika. You will take lessons and become a dancer. We will sleep all day and all night if we choose.

TERRY

You are not just giving me speculations here?

SLATE

(steps to him, hugs him, strokes and fondles him)
Come and see. I will show you. Come and see. The entire world has had intercourse with us, forever, but now it turns and touches its lips to our lips.

TERRY

You are truly in possession of this wonder.

SLATE

I am.

TERRY

We will go to New York and London and see theater and ballet and motion pictures?

SLATE

We will *buy* a theater. We will *make* motion pictures. You will become a star.

TERRY

Where are we to meet Lewis?

SLATE

At the Urban. Tonight. I thought of you first.

TERRY

When?

SLATE

When I discovered this. I thought of you first.

TERRY

Me first? Why?

SLATE

The look on your beautiful face. Come and see.

(Exeunt. Tableau. Lights dim.)

(Lights up.
 Chairs are set up in rows, this time facing us.
 Some chairs filled; some empty.
 In the front row sit Nicky and Lewis: a slightly older boy, neatly groomed, wearing a three-piece suit. They stare out over us. Light is darkish and flickering. Throughout the scene we hear the constant mutter of a movie soundtrack, not quite audible. Intermittently, slides bearing phrases are projected on the back wall, seen by us but unseen by the film audience. The film audience always responds as the phrase commands. First slide: ANTICIPATE.
 Black, with soundtrack; then second slide: WIDEN EYES.
 Black, with soundtrack; then: SURPRISE
 Black, with soundtrack; then: INTRIGUE.

At rear enter Slate and Terry, peering in the dark. Terry points; they come and slide into the front row, Terry next to Lewis, Slate next to Nicky. All sit staring at film, unsurprised.
 Slide: TESTOSTERONE BURST.
 Black, with soundtrack; then: CHUCKLE.
 After they all chuckle, Slate leans over Nicky; still staring forward at movie; speaks quietly.)

SLATE

Were you to come into possession of a quantity of valuable substance, how might you pursue transacting it into currency?

(Slide: AWE AT INCREDIBLE WEALTH.)

NICKY

(when done ooohing)

Who is interested to know this?

SLATE

I am not addressing you.

LEWIS

Who is interested to know this?

TERRY

Slate is interested to know this.

LEWIS

And why so?

TERRY

Curiosity.

LEWIS

(pauses)

There are a number of minor-scale brokers available to you on any number of doorways in this city. You need not bother me with your petty transactions. My livelihood turns on more substantial matters.

SLATE

Hm.

(Slide: POIGNANT MOMENT.
Black, with soundtrack; then:
ANGER, WITH TESTOSTERONE.
Black, with soundtrack.
ANXIETY.)

SLATE

What would you do in the case of coming into possession of too great an amount of valuable substance to entrust to a streetside dealer?

LEWIS

How great an amount?

SLATE

Say, a suitcase full.

LEWIS

(laughs out loud; catches self, looks around with embarrassment)
Substantial matters do not come in suitcases.

TERRY

Oh do they not?

LEWIS

No they do not.

NICKY

Someone has sold you a case of cornstarch.

TERRY

Is that the fact.

NICKY

Yes.

SLATE

(pulling out small ziploc bag of white stuff)
Here is a small sample of this cornstarch.

(Hands it over; Nicky tries to grab it, but Slate slaps his hand aside, hands it to Lewis. Lewis stares at it skeptically.)

Slide: LAUGH.

All laugh. Lewis opens bag, sticks in finger, sets tiny amount on tongue. Has brief violent reaction. Calms self quickly.)

LEWIS

Do you know what this is?

(Slate chuckles.)

LEWIS

Do you or do you not?

SLATE

(sobered)

Well . . . it is heroin. Is it not?

LEWIS

No. Where did you get this?

TERRY

He got it.

LEWIS

Where is this suitcase?

TERRY

Safe.

LEWIS

I need to see this.

SLATE

How would you pursue this transaction?

LEWIS

(suddenly sits back, casual)

Who knows what I might do? Who cares? It is no big deal.

(Slide: SENTIMENTAL HEART TUG.

Lewis "Awwwww"s particularly loud. Slate looks at him; nods briefly to Terry. They rise to leave.)

SLATE

So be it then.

Wait. LEWIS

(Slate and Terry sit.)

LEWIS
(grudgingly)
My connections in this profession are currently in Inagua. All such business is routed through there. Are you interested in transaction here or abroad?

SLATE
Whichever provides superior return. Where is Inagua?

NICKY
It is an island, ignorant one.

SLATE
So be it.

(rises to leave)

Wait. LEWIS

(Slate sits.
Slide: MOUNTING FEAR.)

LEWIS
I will agree to be your representative in this matter.

TERRY
Since when do we need a representative?

LEWIS
My contacts are the result of long effort. They are highly placed. They will take advantage of you without my assistance.

TERRY
Your assistance can have intercourse with itself--

SLATE
Wait. We agree to your help.

LEWIS
For a slight fee.

SLATE
How slight?

LEWIS
Fifty percent.

No. SLATE
(nods to Terry)

(They rise to leave.)

Wait. LEWIS

(They sit.
Slide: LAUGH.)

Thirty percent. LEWIS

Five percent. TERRY

Twenty five. LEWIS

Ten percent. That is final. SLATE

Done. LEWIS
(considers)

So be it then. May I have my sample? SLATE
(nods)

I will retain this as an advance on your promise, and as surety for when I approach my contacts. LEWIS

No. TERRY

Yes. That is fair. SLATE

Where will I contact you? LEWIS

We will contact *you*. SLATE
(as he and Terry rise)

(They leave. Lewis looks at sample.)

What is it? NICKY

(Lewis shushes him.
Several slides in rapid succession:
LAUGH.
TESTOSTERONE.
FEAR.
WIDEN EYES.
CLIMAX.
RELIEF.

Lights dim.)

(Low lights up on a chair with the attache case on it. Upstage two chairs facing away from us. Almost offstage. A space between them. Slate in one, Terry in the other. They face away, not looking at each other, not touching, not moving.)

Oh. SLATE

Oh. TERRY

Oh. SLATE

Oh. Oh. TERRY

Oh. SLATE

TERRY
Oh it is good. Oh it is very good.

SLATE
Oh. Oh extremity of good.

TERRY
Oh excellent.

SLATE
Oh.

TERRY
Oh have intercourse. Oh have intercourse with me.

SLATE
Oh yes I will.

TERRY
Oh have intercourse with me.

SLATE
Oh yes I am doing so. Oh.

Oh. TERRY

Oh. Oh it is too good. SLATE

Oh. TERRY

Oh. SLATE

Oh. Oh. TERRY & SLATE

Oh proximity of orgasm. TERRY

Oh the approach of orgasm. SLATE

Oh the delaying. TERRY

Oh the resisting. SLATE

Oh the prolonging. TERRY

Oh inevitability of orgasm. SLATE

Oh it us upon us. TERRY

Oh my glands expand. SLATE

And mine as well. TERRY

They contract. SLATE

And again. TERRY

And again. SLATE

And again. TERRY

And again. SLATE

And again. TERRY

Oh. Oh. (pause) Oh. SLATE&TERRY

Oh. TERRY

Oh. SLATE

(Long silence. They still do not move.)

TERRY
I love the manner in which you have intercourse with me.

SLATE
I love having intercourse with you.

(They languish.)

SLATE
I am excrement.

TERRY
You are not. What is your meaning?

SLATE
To the world, I am excrement. I have always been excrement. The world has *made* me excrement. But you. You make me different.

TERRY
You *are* different.

SLATE
In your eyes. In no other eyes ever. In the mirror of your eyes I am a good thing.

TERRY
You are a good thing. A beautiful thing.

SLATE
Only in your eyes. You are a person of beauty. Do you see that in my eyes?

TERRY
(pauses, smiling)
We swindle the world.

How?
SLATE

TERRY
By making each other feel good.

SLATE
Yes.

TERRY
It is not what the world wants.

SLATE
The world wants to have intercourse with us in the anus.

TERRY
But we have cheated them. And now.

SLATE
Now the world will want to clasp our hands. And ask our permission.

TERRY
For what?

SLATE
Anything.

TERRY
Now it will be us to choose.

SLATE
Yes.

(Pause.)

TERRY
When we are wealthy. When our ship arrives at port. Will we become weary of each other, do you think?

SLATE
Why do you ask such a question?

TERRY
Because we will be surrounded by voluptuous and attractive opportunities. Our heads may spin, and we may become confused. It is normal and understandable.

SLATE
Will you grow weary of me?

TERRY
Absolutely not.

SLATE

How can you be certain?

TERRY

I cannot imagine the film actor's face which would make me forget yours. There is no question. I only imagine that you may be drawn to other more glamorous possibilities.

SLATE

How can you imagine such a thing?

TERRY

I can imagine it.

SLATE

Then I suggest you study my face when next I achieve orgasm with you. You will learn differently. If you will study my face, I think you will see something that will not change, or decay, or grow weary.

TERRY

I will do so.

SLATE

Good.

TERRY

I hope it is true. I hope you and I are together through all the temptations of wealth.

SLATE

I do as well.

(Pause.)

TERRY

Perhaps there is one film actor . . .

SLATE

Have intercourse with yourself. Well perhaps there is one.

TERRY

Perhaps we might grant each other special permission, should he wander in and present himself to us.

SLATE

That is fair. Who will go first?

TERRY

You.

SLATE

No, you.

TERRY

No, you.

(Pause.)

TERRY

When we are wealthy, to what good causes will we donate?

(Slate chuckles.)

TERRY

What is funny?

SLATE

Your joke.

TERRY

I made no joke.

SLATE

Did you not?

TERRY

Surely we will share our newfound wealth.

SLATE

We will share it constantly, with persons who will in turn provide us goods and services.

TERRY

But some of it we will use to make the world a better place.

SLATE

Now that is a *good* joke.

TERRY

It is no joke. There is more to living than our own comfort, you know.

SLATE

If so, I do not know what it is.

TERRY

Of course you do. Justice. Peace. Things like that.

SLATE

You may spend your share on all the justice and peace you want.

TERRY

Fine. Fine. You may spend your share on malted milk balls.

SLATE

Perhaps I will.

TERRY

Do you live only for yourself?

SLATE

As do you.

TERRY

Not true. I also live for you.

SLATE

I see. Well. After myself, and only that, I live for you also.

TERRY

After yourself, of course.

SLATE

Of course. That is how it must be. I recommend you do the same.

TERRY

Alright then.

SLATE

Alright then.

(Icy pause.)

TERRY

I am thirsty.

SLATE

Fine. Whatever.

(Terry pissily gets up to go. Stops.)

TERRY

Are you thirsty as well?

SLATE

(is going to say something curt, but thinks better of it)
Yes.

TERRY

I will get us something.

SLATE

Thank you.

(Terry turns to walk between the chairs and downstage. Sees chair with attache case. Wanders over; kneels, opens case. The contents of the case glow. Terry stares at it in wonder. Behind him has entered someone in black catburglar outfit, with black ski mask covering face and head. The burglar carries a small pistol; attaches a black tube to the end of pistol. Points it at Terry. Terry is enraptured in the case; but

suddenly he looks up, starts to look around.
 Burglar whispers "Bang." Terry falls dead
 silently. Burglar closes case, picks it up. Stands,
 looking upstage toward entrance between two
 chairs; considers; leaves silently.
 Silence.
 Slate calls out without moving.)

SLATE

Terry?

(pause)

I am sorry.

(pause)

Perhaps you are right.

(pause)

Perhaps

(pause)

I do not know.

(long pause)

I did think of you first. Your look of joy. Even before myself.

(long pause)

Terry?

(Lights dim.)

(Lights up.
Nicky sits on a chair with his legs up on another chair. He faces a woman in a chair who sits facing him. They stare at each other. She speaks to him sincerely, persuasively, pausing between phrases.)

WOMAN

Use Mac shampoo and you can have intercourse with me.
Drive a Lancer. Your penis will be large and brutal like those of the pirates of old.
It is good to be attractive.
It is good to be beautiful.
It is good to be sensitive, though it is better to be beautiful.
A day at Magicland amusement park will involve no sexual threat to you or your children.
Wear this; you will appear wealthy, which in turn will make your genitals moisten and enlarge, as well as other genitals around you.
You are never alone when I am with you.

MOM
(offstage)

Nicky?

NICKY

Yes mother?

MOM

What are you doing?

NICKY

Nothing. Watching TV.

MOM

Are you feeling any better?

NICKY

Yes I am. Soon I should be well enough to return to school.

MOM

Good.

WOMAN

You may wear a double-breasted suit even if you are asian or black.
Drink Lemon Lick. It tastes like an orgasm.
Power and wealth make more and better orgasms available.
If you have a large penis or large breasts, you have less need of power and wealth, though they are more available to you.
I will bring you better orgasms.
You are never alone when I am with you.

(Behind Nicky enter Slate. Slate looks around, sees noone else; steps over, grabs Nicky's throat. Nicky freezes in fear. The TV continues to address them, more intermittently. As they move about, the TV turns to face them as if trying to regain their attention.)

Where is he? SLATE

Who? NICKY

SLATE
(jerking his neck hold for emphasis)
Where is he?

You mean Lewis? NICKY

SLATE
Terry is dead. Lewis is responsible. He is not at his house. You will tell me where he is.

He is on a field trip. NICKY

SLATE
(pulling out a stilleto, pressing button so blade springs out)
A field trip to where?

Inagua. NICKY
(terrified)

Where in Inagua? SLATE

I do not know. NICKY

(Slate touches Nicky's neck with knife.)

I do not know! NICKY

SLATE
Terry's death is somehow Lewis's doing, so you are also responsible. We can settle this account right now if you like--

I do not know! This is the truth! I tried to listen but they heard me and they . . . NICKY

What? SLATE

Cut me. NICKY

Where? SLATE
(loosens hold slightly)

Nowhere bad. Just a blade in . . . here.

(Points to right armpit. Slate lets him go.)

Old people are like pets. Love for them feels good, though does not involve orgasm.

I wanted to go with him. I begged him. And Lewis wanted to take me along. He begged them. But they wouldn't listen to him.

Black is the color of orgasm.

Who were they? SLATE

A man and a woman. NICKY

Where in Inagua? SLATE

I do not know. I heard three words. Masayu, Kahuku, and Orlando. NICKY

Masayu. Kahuku. Orlando. Are those places in Inagua? SLATE

I do not know. They left me behind. NICKY

Masayu. Kahuku. Orlando. I will find out. You will tell no one. SLATE

You had truly a soft spot for this Terry. NICKY

Shut up! Do not speak his name with your nausea-inducing vocal apparatus. You are less SLATE
(grabs him, twists arm)

than an insect on the sole of his shoe. For touching his name with your sticky tongue I would end your life right here, but he . . .

(catches himself, turns to us, choking)

Sob. Stifle.

(letting Nicky go)

. . . would not want me to. Live then, you dirt-consuming bug. He will be avenged.

NICKY

May I come too?

SLATE

Goodbye.

NICKY

Wait! Take me as well!

(Jumps up weakly and grabs at Slate, who shakes him off, leaves.)

NICKY

Take me as well! Please!

(Sobs, kneels.)

WOMAN

Bodily functions inhibit the pursuit of orgasm.

A head cold is the opposite of orgasm.

A large boat is similar to a large penis.

I will dominate you, to which you will object, but your orgasms will be so great as to override your objections.

Day to day life does not contain enough orgasms.

NICKY

(muttering)

Could have taken me along. What will I do now? All activity is there, I am left here. What use am I? Of what use to me is here?

(Switches off TV. Sits, pulls up large radio. Turns it on: loud rock music. Pulls out a syringe attached to an electric cord, which he plugs into the radio. Still sobbing, whimpering, muttering, Nicky inserts syringe into his arm. As it is inserted, the music is muffled--though not silenced--as if entering his body. He moans, sighs, stops sobbing, leans back as the IV music soothes him. Lights dim.)

(Cast creates noise of airplane engines.
A row of chairs sideways to us. All full.
Slate sits in one near the middle. Enter a
Steward, speaking with hand-held microphone.)

STEWARD

Good afternoon and welcome to Angel Airlines, our destination is Houston Texas and we'll be flying at an altitude of thirtyone thousand feet, please take a moment and note the emergency exits nearest your seat, in the event of emergency oxygen masks, flotation cushions, and parachutes will automatically drop down from above. Please attach your own oxygen and parachute before attaching those of any small children. On your earphones today, we have a wide selection of classical and popular music, as well as comedy, news, and religion. On your eyephones today, our movie will start in five minutes; or you may choose to view popular television series, nostalgia, wrestling, or religion. On your mouthphones we have chicken normandie or beef sudan. If you would like special vegetarian mouthphones, please press the pink button and call your steward or stewardess.

(Steward has been demonstrating the attachment of ear-, eye-, and mouthphones, which completely cover their respective organs. Most passengers attach all three sets. Slate does not, nor does the person behind him.)

STEWARD

Angel Airlines wishes you a pleasant flight. Ready for takeoff.

(Passengers go "vroooooom" and lean back as the airplane takes off. Then the noise subsides, passengers lean back forward and sit quietly with phones attached, all making humming noise of airplane in flight.
Slate looks around nervously. Behind him sits a man in overcoat, floppy hat, and dark glasses. The man has dark skin. He slowly pulls out an automatic weapon, points at the back of Slate's head. Suddenly Slate calls out:)

SLATE

Stewardess!

(The man quickly lowers and hides weapon as Steward walks out to Slate.)

STEWARD

Steward, thank you sir. What can I--

(Slate draws out a weapon and points it.)

What is that? STEWARD

A weapon. SLATE

Jokes are illegal here, sir. STEWARD

It is the truth. SLATE

Nonsense. Airport security would not permit. STEWARD

I assembled it on board. SLATE

From what? STEWARD

Fluid containers, toiletry articles, and silverware from first class. It is lethal. SLATE

It is not. STEWARD

It is so. SLATE

Is not. STEWARD

Is so. SLATE

Is not. STEWARD

Is so! SLATE

What you describe impossible. STEWARD

I learned it on the Internet. SLATE
(stands)
(points gun down at chair)

BANG!
Hands on head please.

(Steward complies. They look around: no one else has noticed.)

SLATE

You will take this plane to Inagua.

STEWARD

But we only have fuel to Houston.

SLATE

Make it last.

STEWARD

Right away, sir. A pleasure to serve you.

(Steward walks to edge of stage: calls offstage:)

STEWARD

Inagua!

(Passengers go VRROOOOOOM and lean back suddenly as the airplane noise becomes loud and fast as if with great speed. None of them remove phones or seem to notice change. Steward calls out)

STEWARD

Fort Lauderdale. Santo Domingo. Montserrat. Approaching Inagua. Your stop, sir.

(Airplane slows down to normal. Slate stands carefully. Behind him and behind the man behind him, yet *another* passenger has removed all phones. Stands, quietly, unseen; now leaps at Slate, disarming him. The Steward pulls out his own weapon and points it at Slate.)

PASSENGER

Homeland Security. Drop your weapon!

(The man in overcoat is up: he knocks over the Steward, disarms the Passenger, yelling "Whack! Pow!" Throws weapon on them all.)

STEWARD

Are you also Homeland Security?

MAN IN OVERCOAT

Not for any money.

(tosses Slate's weapon back to him.)

This is your destination. Emergency!

(pushes button: someone offstage throws on parachutes.)

MAN IN OVERCOAT

Jump!

(Slate and the man grab parachutes and weapons, jump off plane. All other passengers, chairs, stewards etc. are whirled away. Wind noises all around as Slate and the man fall, meanwhile struggling into the parachutes. They yell over the noises of rushing air.)

MAN
I BEG YOUR PARDON FOR INTERRUPTING.

SLATE
THAT IS NO PROBLEM. DO YOU HAVE BUSINESS IN THE AREA AS WELL?

MAN
YES I DO.

SLATE
QUITE A COINCIDENCE.

MAN
AND MOST CONVENIENT. THAT UNDERCOVER AGENT WOULD HAVE FOILED EITHER OF OUR ATTEMPTS SINGLY.

SLATE
INDEED. ON WHAT WEBSITE DID YOU LEARN TO CONSTRUCT YOUR WEAPON?

MAN
IT IS A SECRET, THOUGH YOU ARE WELCOME TO GOOGLE. I WILL PERHAPS SEE YOU LATER.

(The Man has by now gotten parachute on; he removes glasses and hat: he is a woman. She wears a bright red scarf which trails upward.)

SLATE
PERHAPS. GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR BUSINESS. WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

WOMAN
ROSALYA.

(Rosalya pulls on one side of the parachute ropes; is carried away and off. Slate pulls on his ropes and is carried off opposite. Slate falls and lands on the ground in a crumple heap. Voices off:)

VOICES
BANG!
BANG!
BANG!

(Slate hits the dirt as the gunfire continues. On staggers a teenage girl--not Rosalya--wearing guerilla fatigues and carrying an AK-47. She is exhausted, wounded. She turns, fires offstage:)

GIRL
Bangabangabangabangabanga!

(She staggers back, collapses with exhaustion. Continued gunfire. Slate crawls over, listens for breath and heartbeat; picks her up, drags her away in a circle around the stage.)

SLATE
Drag drag drag drag drag

(As he does so, the gunfire noises get quieter and finally cease. He drags her until suddenly she kicks him away, leaps up to sitting position with rifle pointed at him.)

GIRL
Do not touch me.

SLATE
I was helping you.

GIRL
That does not matter. Nobody touches me there.

SLATE
Where?

GIRL
Where you were touching me.

SLATE
I was touching your armpits.

(Or "ankles" if that's how he was doing it)

GIRL
That is what I mean. Who are you?

SLATE
Will you please stop aiming that weapon at me?

GIRL
No.

SLATE
Who was shooting at you?

GIRL

None of your intercoursing business. Are you a foreign agent?

SLATE

No.

GIRL

You are one of them.

SLATE

Of whom?

GIRL

None of your intercoursing--

(Suddenly Slate kicks her barrel away, holds his own weapon to her nose. She freezes.)

SLATE

I am one of nothing. I am employed solely by myself. Please set your weapon aside.

GIRL

(does so)

I am not fooled by your untruths.

SLATE

How old are you?

GIRL

Fourteen years of age and one half.

SLATE

Why are you carrying that weapon?

GIRL

I am a soldier.

SLATE

You are too young to be a soldier.

GIRL

So are you.

SLATE

That is my affair. You are too young.

GIRL

Everyone older is gone.

SLATE

Where?

GIRL

Dead. Everyone older is dead by your intercouring army of mercenaries sponsored by your intercouring government. I am one of the oldest left to fight.

SLATE

Why are you fighting against my government?

GIRL

Because your government is making war on us.

SLATE

Why?

GIRL

Because we stopped growing their intercouring sugar cane.

SLATE

Sugar cane? I have not heard of this war.

GIRL

Of course you have not. Your intercouring imperialist multicorporate government set up an intercouring puppet dictatorship here for the purpose of spending no money whatsoever and using all our arable land to grow their intercouring sugar for your intercouring coffee and cookies. We finally said Go have intercourse with yourself to this dictator and exported him in a candy box and now your intercouring Central Intelligence Agency for which you are probably an intercouring agent is paying intercouring traitors and rapists and alcoholics to murder and torture and reestablish their intercouring sugarcane dictatorship. They will not succeed while any of us are left alive. I suppose they do not tell you all this in your intercouring schools.

SLATE

I do not attend schools. I am no agent. I was going to ask your assistance, but I see you are worthless to me.

(picks up her weapon)

I will be on my way.

GIRL

Because you are an agent.

(Slate turns back angrily, shoves gunbarrel in her face.)

SLATE

I suggest you listen closely. I am no agent. Where I am concerned, the intercouring government of the intercouring country where I happened to be intercouring born can go have intercourse with itself. I take orders from no one. Have you understood that?

(Girl nods.)

SLATE

Furthermore I have recently saved your life and you are ungrateful.

GIRL

I apologize.

(In one move, she shoves gunbarrel away and flings Slate expertly over her shoulder. She kicks his weapon away, snatches up her own and trains it on him.)

GIRL
(giggling a little)

You were appearing to help me for the purpose of gaining my trust. It is the oldest trick in the world.

SLATE
It was not a trick.

(Yelling "Dirt!" he flings dirt in her eyes, rolling aside instantly as she fires with a "Bang!" but misses him. He is up, disarming her; she rubs dirt from her eyes as he trains her weapon on her.)

SLATE
That was a trick.

GIRL
An excremental parasitic imperialist trick.

SLATE
If you are counting, you will notice this is now three times I have in effect saved your life.

GIRL
Yes and so what?

SLATE
I am in this country on business of my own and am not involved with any intercoursing government. I have spared your life--three times--for the purpose of getting some information. If you will just tell me where Masayu, Kahuku, and Orlando are, I will be on my way.

GIRL
What do you want with Masayu?

SLATE
That is my intercoursing business.

GIRL
See? I knew you were an agent.

SLATE
I am not an agent.

GIRL
You are too an agent.

SLATE
I am not--

GIRL
You are too.

SLATE
Am not!

GIRL
Are too.

SLATE
Am NOT!

GIRL
(fingers in ears)
Agent agent agent agent--

SLATE
(lifts weapon in air)
BANG!

(Girl jumps, uncovering ears.)

SLATE
I am not an agent!

GIRL
If you were not an agent you would tell me why you are going to Masayu.

SLATE
(hesitates)
I have a score to settle with someone who I believe is there.

GIRL
Who?

SLATE
(aiming at her)
That is *truly* none of your business.

GIRL
(casually slapping barrel away)
Oh stop with that. I am tired of that.

SLATE
Tired of what?

GIRL
Your test. I know you are no agent.

SLATE
How?

GIRL

I knew immediately. I know with my heart on such matters. No agent would wear clothes like you.

(She giggles.)

SLATE

How can you be sure?

GIRL

A woman simply knows.

SLATE

You are not yet a woman.

(Girl explodes: shrieks, attacks, overwhelms Slate, disarming him with several yells of "Kick! Thok! Biff!" and standing over him with both weapons pointed down at his face.)

GIRL

I am not what?

SLATE

You are whatever you say.

GIRL

(lifting guns)

That is better.

(Voice off)

VOICE

Pita!

GIRL

Here, Chinge!

(Enter Chinge, a boy also in guerrilla clothes with AK-47.)

CHINGE

You have caught an agent?

GIRL (PITA)

I think he is no agent.

CHINGE

Of course he is an agent. Look at his clothes. He is an agent of their intercouring Central Intelligence. We have no time to discuss this.

PITA

He is no agent. He wants to go to Masayu.

CHINGE

Fool! Have you told this agent our plans for Masayu?

(While they argue, Slate is up; he disarms Chinge--
"Snatch! Wrench!"--and points gun at his eyeball.)

SLATE

If I were this intercouring agent you would be a dead person now. You may be anyway if you continue in this manner.

(Pause.)

PITA

See?

SLATE

Now. What is Masayu?

PITA

It is a sugar refinery.

CHINGE

Shhhh!

SLATE

(nudging him with gun)

You shh.

PITA

Since our revolt, Masayu has become a walled fortress for counterrevolutionaries. In attacking it we serve two purposes thus.

CHINGE

Pita, you are a traitor.

SLATE

Quiet. (pause) I will join your attack.

CHINGE

Not possible.

PITA

He has his own weapons. I think we may not turn him down.

CHINGE

No no no no. He is an agent.

PITA

(kicks him)

Oh stop. Do not be a baby.

CHINGE
(suddenly very dignified)
I am no baby.

SLATE
(picks up Chinge's gun, holds it out to him)
And I am no agent. Am I?

(Chinge looks at him. Takes gun. Reluctant:)

CHINGE
We attack at nightfall.

(Lights dim.)

(Lights up.
Slate and Pita lying on ground with weapons;
relaxed; before the attack.)

PITA
You live by selling your body?

SLATE
Yes.

PITA
That is disgusting.

SLATE
Where I come from it is an honorable profession.

PITA
Disgusting. To wealthy females, I suppose.

SLATE
No.

PITA
Poor females?

SLATE
No females.

PITA
To whom then?

SLATE
Men.

PITA
That is doubly disgusting.

SLATE
I am not bothered by it. Nor are my customers.

PITA
My stomach capsizes. (pause) What is wrong with females?

SLATE
Nothing is wrong with females.

PITA

Why do you not sell your body to females?

SLATE

I refuse to have intercourse with females.

PITA

Ever?

SLATE

Ever.

PITA

You have never had intercourse with a female?

SLATE

Nor do I intend to.

PITA

I suppose you believe that females are sinful? Or soiled perhaps?

SLATE

Neither.

PITA

What is wrong with them then?

SLATE

Nothing is wrong with them.

PITA

Then why will you not ever--

SLATE

Intercourse with females can easily lead to conception and birth. I will not be a party to the bringing of new birth into this excremental world.

PITA

Hm. Have you never even had the urge to have intercourse with a woman?

SLATE

Never.

PITA

Hm. (pause) Many of us here never have intercourse at all.

SLATE

Why not?

PITA

We do not live long enough. First we are too young, then there is no time, then we are dead.

SLATE

That is sad.

PITA

Chinge wants to have intercourse, but he does not know how. I do not desire it with him. All of us will die, soon or late. Your intercoursing government--

SLATE

It is not my government.

PITA

The government of your intercoursing country will defeat us soon or late and we will die. Maybe today. Or later.

SLATE

Maybe you will not die.

PITA

Oh yes. They will kill us all. And then they will bring people from elsewhere to harvest their excrement-intercoursing sugarcane.

SLATE

Why do you continue to fight then?

PITA

I do not know.

(pause)

I would like to feel a man's penis before I am dead.

(Pause.)

SLATE

Would you like to have intercourse with me?

PITA

Yes. But you do not have intercourse with females.

(Pause.)

SLATE

After this battle, after we take Masayu and my score is settled. If you like. I will have intercourse with you.

PITA

I would like that. (pause) It will be a first time for us both.

SLATE

Yes I suppose so.

PITA

That is good. (pause) In return I promise I will not give birth.

SLATE
Thank you.
I believe Terry would approve. (pause; to himself)

PITA
Who is Terry?

SLATE
None of your concern.

PITA
Fine then. None of my concern.

(Pause.)

SLATE
He was a special person to me.

PITA
I see. Why do you say was?

SLATE
He is dead.

PITA
Oh. I am sorry.
(pause)
Is that why you are here?

SLATE
Terry was murdered. His murderer was named Lewis. Lewis might be in Masayu.

PITA
You will try to find this Lewis.

SLATE
Yes.

PITA
And settle this score.

SLATE
With great pain I hope.

PITA
I see. And then?

SLATE
I don't know.

PITA
I see. (pause) You will go away though.

SLATE

Yes.

PITA

And perhaps find another special to you.

SLATE

There will be no one else like Terry.

PITA

I see. You will have intercourse again though.

SLATE

Probably.

PITA

I hope you find once more someone. I hope with my heart that you live and find this. Not the same as before, but still special. I hope that for you.

SLATE

I hope that for you too.

PITA

Do not waste hope. I have told you. We do not live long enough here.

SLATE

Oh.

PITA

You will live though. I have at least met one person who will live long enough.

(Pause.)

SLATE

We need not wait till after the battle. We may have intercourse now. If you like.

PITA

Would you like that?

SLATE

I would. Would you like that?

PITA

Yes. How does it work?

SLATE

I will show you.

(A low whistle from off.)

PITA

We advance. There is no time now.

Later then. SLATE

Later then. PITA

(They rise, advance off. Battle noises.)

VOICES
BANG BANG BANG BOOM BANG SPOW POP BANG etc.

(Battle noises down. Enter Slate and Pita, bound and blindfolded. Enter also two soldiers--teenage boys--and a tall man with a beard and a US-style uniform. The boys train guns on Pita and Slate.)

SOLDIER
(at attention)
Boss! What! About! These! Boss!

MAN
(of Pita)
Take this one away. (to her) Senorita, you have just recruited yourself in the army of democracy.

PITA
Have intercourse with yourself.

(Man slaps her--without touching.)

MAN
Slap! Take her.

SOLDIER
Boss! Yes! Boss!

(Soldier leaves with Pita.)

OTHER SOLDIER
Boss! This one! Boss!

MAN
(to Slate)
You are a foreign national, are you not?

SLATE
No.

MAN
Yep. Same as me. Only I get to live and you do not.

(nods to Soldier)

SOLDIER

Boss! Yes! Boss!

(Man leaves. Soldier drops Attention; aims rifle at Slate's head. Hesitates.)

SOLDIER

I apologize for this. It seems that soldiers from your country are not supposed to be here, so they want no witnesses.

SLATE

You are my age.

SOLDIER

So what?

SLATE

There are no grownups on your side either?

SOLDIER

Who needs grownups? They are old and brittle. They bruise and bleed and die easily. They hesitate. It is no adventure for them.

SLATE

I see.

SOLDIER

Bye.

(Is about to pull trigger, when:
Voices all around the stage, in unison, loud but calm:)

VOICES

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM.

(Soldier and Slate are hurled over. Explosion stops. Soldier is unconscious. Slate struggles to sit up. Enter Rosalya, still wearing her bright red scarf. She has been running. She stops; pulls out a sticker; licks it; sticks it next to two others on the barrel of her automatic weapon. She is going to leave, but she sees the bodies. She goes to Slate, unblindfolds him, steps away. He stares at her, blinking. She smiles.)

ROSALYA

Hello.

SLATE

It is a pleasure to see you again. What was that?

ROSALYA

The explosion?

SLATE

Yes.

ROSALYA

That was large chunks of the factory at Masayu turning into pure energy.

SLATE

You blew up the sugar refinery?

ROSALYA

Sugar refinery?

(laughs as she unbinds him)

For nuclear-powered sugar. But not for long, if I succeed. I must hurry. See you later.

SLATE

Wait. Tell me your name again. Who are you? Whom are you attacking and why?

ROSALYA

My name is Rosalya.

SLATE

Rosalya, I remember now.

ROSALYA

Do not forget. You will hear the name Rosalya again. People will lie about Rosalya. They will invent lies to convince you Rosalya lies. They will say anything, anything at all, to make you hate Rosalya. But the world will thank Rosalya someday. Because in truth there is one great lie, and that is S2. Will you remember that?

SLATE

Yes.

ROSALYA

(aims gun at his head)

Will you remember that?

SLATE

Without fail.

ROSALYA

Good. You may not see me again. Remember.

(She puts away weapon, turns and runs off.)

SLATE

Wait! Is everyone dead in Masayu?

(She's gone. Slate picks up the soldier's weapon. Considers out loud, to us:)

SLATE

My goal is at Masayu. But Pita needs my aid. My goal might not be at Masayu. But he

might. But Pita might be hurt, or bleeding to death. But so might my goal. But if he is, that is okay with me. But if so, I want to be there. But he might not be there at all. (pause) It is difficult.

Wrestle with dilemma. Consider. What would Terry do? Decide.

He would follow the one most in need. Revenge must wait. Pita requires help.

(He makes to go off after Pita; but stops to hear an agonized groaning offstage.

Enter Lewis, wounded and bloody, staggering on. His eyes are covered with blood; he doesn't appear to see Slate. He groans with agony. He wavers, falls to his knees, groaning. Slate approaches him, stands over him.)

SLATE

Hm.

LEWIS

Huh! Oh my god is someone there? You must help me. (groan) You must help me. Have you got any?

SLATE

I will be glad to help you.

LEWIS

Who is that? Have you got any? I know that voice. Help me!

SLATE

Of course you know it. You have heard it many times. Listen well to it. Enjoy it. It will be the last voice you hear.

LEWIS

Slate?

SLATE

Now you have got it. Hello Lewis. I am delighted to see you.

(Lifts Lewis' chin with gunbarrel.)

LEWIS

Slate have you got any?

SLATE

Any what?

LEWIS

(shrieking with pain)

S2! S2! Have you got any?

SLATE

I have something else for you.

(Kicks Lewis in the ribs. Lewis shrieks, rolls up like a bug. Slate stares down at him, frowns.)

SLATE

(to us)

This is not as satisfying as I had hoped.

LEWIS

Slate, it was not I! It was not I, I swear to you!

SLATE

What was not you?

LEWIS

I did not off your boyfriend Terry. She forced me to tell where to find you.

SLATE

Falsehood will not help you now.

LEWIS

It was not I! I swear--

(shrieks)

Have you got any!

SLATE

Who is she?

LEWIS

Diana! I went to them and she forced me to tell her and they brought me here with big promises and then she betrayed me to the federals and now I am a gerbel, I am a laboratory rat, they have been testing me to see how much I can take!

SLATE

How much what?

LEWIS

S2! S2! HAVE YOU GOT ANY!

SLATE

No I do not.

LEWIS

Just a small amount. I will repay you with ANYTHING!

SLATE

What is S2?

LEWIS

I will get ANYTHING for you!

SLATE

I have none.

LEWIS

(a groan of despair)

Ooooooh, excrement, intercourse, intercourse me dead, intercourse, bowels, bowels . . .

(starts to convulse)

Convulse. Convulse. Gag. Spit up blood. Shiver. Tremble. Convulse . . .

(freezes)

Die.

(Falls on face with a thud. Lies still. Slate prods him with gunbarrel. Stares for a moment. Then:)

SLATE

Well that was not satisfying at all.

(He continues to stare at the body.

Behind Slate enter Diana. She moves up behind him silently. Before he hears her, she reaches out, touches his neck with two fingers.)

SLATE

(jerking up stiffly)

Freeze!

(falls over stiffly, eyes open, still breathing.)

Paralyze.

(Diana bends over him and pulls his face to see her.)

DIANA

(calm, friendly)

My name is Die. Lewis was right, you know. He did not kill your little sodomite lover.

(pause)

I did.

(Lights out.)

(Lights up.
Slate bound to chair. Diana sitting near him.
Silence.)

DIANA
(singsong)
Who is your frie-end?

(pause)

Who is your frie-end?

(Silence. Diana touches chair. Slate winces.)

DIANA
Who is your frie-end?

(No response. She touches chair. He winces.)

DIANA
Who is your friend?

SLATE
Go have intercourse with yourself.

(She touches chair; he winces.)

DIANA
I am your friend. Am I not?

(touches chair; he winces)

I am your friend. Were it not for me you would be decomposing on the jungle floor, rather than in an air-conditioned room on the island of Maui.

(pause)

Who is your friend?

(touches chair; wince)

SLATE
Go have intercourse with yourself.

DIANA
(touching chair; he winces)
You do not truly mean that, do you?

SLATE
No.

DIANA
I thought not.

SLATE

I mean you should swallow excrement and *then* go have intercourse with--

(She touches chair; he winces stiffly.)

DIANA

You have so little respect for me, yet I have great respect for you. I brought you here instead of reducing you to rotting flesh because the moment you succeeded in knocking me unconscious with your Internet-based martial art skills, I knew you to be highly skilled in ways which can be useful to us.

SLATE

Who is us?

DIANA

We are, oh, a family of entrepreneurs. We trade in forbidden substance of all sorts, often with much at risk. But there is an opportunity of unusual proportions coming to be, and I do not intend to miss it. It has become my personal project. You may be part of it as well: all you have to do is be my friend.

SLATE

Swallow excrement.

(She grips the chair, holds it firmly. Slate winces, squirms, struggles not to shout. She stares at him as she grips; he tries to stare back; finally cannot; closes eyes and writhes with pain. She lets go; he relaxes, panting.)

DIANA

It troubles me to see you in pain. You cannot be utilized until your attitude undergoes a positive transformation.

SLATE

Swallow--

DIANA

(touches chair; he winces)

You have already suggested that. Regardless, I am your friend. God is your friend. God wants you to feel good. He wants you to be clean and feel good. We have ended the painful section of our treatment. You will feel good now. Here.

(She grips chair firmly. Slate's head sags back, his mouth opens with agony. Diana pops something into his mouth; lets go of chair and slaps him on the back. He swallows abruptly.)

SLATE

What was that?

DIANA

A good thing. A precious substance. You will like it. I am indeed your friend to expend some of this precious material on you. Much was destroyed in the recent explosion.

SLATE

S2.

DIANA

Why yes indeed. A derivative of S2, actually. The suitcase you once saw was full of ordinary S2. You have just now swallowed some S4. A more highly refined version. Soon you will feel the effect. Do you feel good yet?

SLATE

Go and have . . . go and have . . .

(He struggles against a languorous and orgasmic feeling which is irresistible.)

DIANA

There you see. There is little use in struggling. And it feels so good. How can it be bad? Does it not feel good?

(Slate's eyes are closed. He whimpers a little, gasping.)

DIANA

But not quite satisfying, am I correct? Rather like an unscratched itch of major proportions. Is it not? Mmmm. Fortunately I am your friend. Otherwise I might, for whimsy, be tempted to make you swallow yet more S4, the pleasurable stimulation of which you would find unbearable. But no. There is in any case not much S4 in the world, and we must conserve. Our goal here is not to destroy you; you are one of God's creatures. We must merely remold your attitude. For example: you are a sodomite, are you not? A packer of fudge? A jammer of wind? God is furious at such perversion, you know. You are a disgusting penetrator of slimy anuses, are you not? Vaginas hold no interest to you, is that not so? And yet. And yet I think right now. . . you desire my vagina, do you not? I think you are desperate for my vagina. I think you would give up anything. Anything. For my vagina. Tell me if that is not so.

(She stares at him; he whimpers, throbbing and helpless.)

DIANA

Yes I think so. Who is your friend?

(She unzips him and herself; straddles him and sits on his lap facing him. He moans. They do not undulate pelvises, though Slate writhes helplessly in blind ecstasy. Diana, though intensely excited, is calm and collected, watching him intently throughout.)

SLATE

Oh. Oh.

DIANA

This is a vagina. Is it good?

SLATE

Oh it is good.

DIANA

My vagina is better than an anus. Is it not?

SLATE

Oh it is good.

DIANA

From now, you will never lose interest in the vagina, will you?

SLATE

Oh. Oh it is so good.

DIANA

You are going to impregnate me. Your seed will plant in my cell and we will have a child. We will have many children.

SLATE

Oh it is very good.

DIANA

Hundreds of children. Thousands of children. Each of your hundred thousand sperm will become a child.

SLATE

(writhing slightly)

Oh it is excellent. Oh. Oh.

DIANA

Do not achieve orgasm yet.

(Slate stops writhing; still in ecstasy.)

DIANA

Each child will grow up and need food and shelter. Many of them will starve to death or die of exposure. Do you want this still?

SLATE

Oh yes. Oh.

DIANA

Each of the hundred thousand will be born into a world of pain. Do you want this still?

SLATE

Yes.

DIANA

Most of them will be deformed. They will lack legs or eyes or fingers or tongues. Life for them will be nothing but suffering. Do you want this still?

SLATE

Yes.

DIANA

They will wish they had never been born. They will wish you had never existed to give them birth. Each of the hundred thousand will grow up to be murdered and die in agony like your sodomite lover. Do you want this still?

SLATE

Yes.

DIANA

Will you murder your sodomite lover again rather than lose this?

SLATE

Yes.

DIANA

And again?

SLATE

Yes.

DIANA

And again?

SLATE

Yes.

DIANA

And again?

SLATE

Yes.

DIANA

Who is your friend?

SLATE

You.

(She holds back just a moment; then:)

DIANA

You may achieve orgasm now.

(Long pause.)

SLATE

Oh.

(Blackout.)

end act one

ACT TWO

(A bare-breasted Model in grass skirt faces us.
Silent for a moment. Then she addresses someone
in the front row:)

MODEL

(sincere, unashamed)

Would you like to feel my mammary glands?

(pause)

You can.

(pause)

Come here and you can.

(pause)

When you touch my mammary glands, I will achieve orgasm. Then you will achieve orgasm.

(pause)

Your orgasms will be good here.

(pause)

Come to Maui. Where orgasms are the finest.

(Man's voice over microphone)

VOICE

Cut it. Sheree, that ran overtime.

MODEL

(muttering)

Excrement.

VOICE

Take it once more. And not do wiggle. Let your mammary glands speak for themselves.

MODEL

Right.

VOICE

Ready?

MODEL

Yes.

VOICE

We are taping.

(Slate has entered at one side. He wears white pants, an aloha shirt, dark glasses and a shoulder holster. He has a beer in one hand, and a noticeable beer belly. He stands openly but unobtrusively at the side, watching. He is chewing gum.)

MODEL

Would you like to feel my mammary glands?
(pause)

You can.
(pause)

Come to Maui and you--excrement.

VOICE

It is alright.

MODEL

Sorry.

VOICE

Once more. We are taping.

MODEL

Would you like to feel my mammary glands?
(pause)

You can.

(She pauses; then mouths the rest silently as enter Diana to Slate.)

DIANA

(whispers)

How is it proceeding here?

SLATE

It is proceeding fine. She is a cute one.

DIANA

Is she not though. (pause) Do you like her glands?

SLATE

They are fine.

DIANA

Would you like to feel them yourself?

SLATE

I would gain some pleasure from that.

DIANA

With your hands?

SLATE
Perhaps. Or face. Or other extremity.

DIANA
Mm. (pause) Who is your friend?

(Slate darkens, then turns with Pavlovian precision and urgency to Diana, grabbing at her breasts and thrusting himself toward her. She sidesteps, smiling.)

DIANA
Easy, tiger boy. Take hold of yourself now. You are an employee here.

VOICE
Diana?

DIANA
Yes?

VOICE
Is there a problem?

DIANA
None at all.

VOICE
See that it remains so, please.

(The Model resumes mouthing her commercial.)

SLATE
(grinning, with a little malicious glee)
You are an employee as well.

DIANA
That is so. Temporarily at least, I am subject to such as those.

SLATE
Temporarily for ever.

DIANA
Perhaps they will come to regret it. Tell me, tiger person. Do you ever long for something better?

SLATE
Better how?

DIANA
More exciting, more far-reaching than our industry here. More compelling than producing advertisements to lure customers into reach of our narcotics. Do you not hanker for larger fish?

SLATE

If it involves dipping my rod in your pond.

DIANA

Later, later. Does this whole venture not grow mundane and wearisome for you?

SLATE

Well. I suppose so. Are there alternatives?

DIANA

Oh yes. And some of us do not intend to miss them. Alternatives abound, and in the immediate vicinity. There is a place called Kahuku, not far from here . . .

SLATE

(frowning, disturbed)

Ww . . . what is Kahuku?

DIANA

A small island, and on that island is an operation to dwarf our own. The transaction of the century is being prepared. Alliances may shift under the weight of profits. We may feel the call of larger organizations. Indeed, the largest.

SLATE

Are they in need of . . . (twirls his pistol) . . . weapons for hire?

DIANA

(sternly)

Put that away. They are not in need of foolish boys. Only intelligent ones. If you remain alert, perhaps you will find opportunities.

SLATE

Where?

DIANA

You will see. Think of it as a test.

SLATE

I hate tests.

DIANA

Did you not do well in high school?

SLATE

(frowns, uncertain)

I don't remember.

DIANA

Did you *go* to high school?

SLATE

I . . . don't . . .

DIANA

Never mind. It is of no importance. Bye now. And remember who your . . . friend is. Now now, stop. Stay alert.

(He has grabbed for her; she giggles, fends him off, and leaves.

Occasionally, as now, the Model speaks out loud.)

MODEL

When you touch my mammary glands, I will achieve orgasm. Then you will.

(She mouths silently again as enter a troop of cub scouts in uniform with beanies, neckerchiefs, shorts, etc. Slate stops them.)

SLATE

Sorry. There is no entry here.

SCOUT #1

We just wanted to watch.

SCOUT #2

Is this a real commercial being filmed?

VOICE

What is it?

SLATE

(over our head)

Cub scouts. Wanting to watch the filming.

VOICE

We welcome tourists. Keep them quiet.

SLATE

Right. (to Scouts) Stand over here quietly and you can watch.

VOICE

All right. Once more. We are taping. Let us get it right this time, for the love of our lord Jesus.

MODEL

Would you like to touch my mammary glands?

(pause)

You can.

(pause)

Come here and you can.

(She mouths words. Slate is looking at scout #3.)

SLATE

(whispering)

You look familiar. Hey. You. You look familiar.

SCOUT #3
(not looking at him)
I do not know what you mean.

SLATE
I mean that we have met before. Where have we met before?

SCOUT #3
We have never met before.

SLATE
From where do I know your face?

SCOUT #3
(looks at him now)
I know *your* face. Your name is . . . what is your name?

SLATE
From where do I know your face? Wait one minute. You are no cub scout. You are not even a boy.

(He snatches off #3's beanie: long hair falls out. It is Pita.)

SLATE
You --

(Scout #1 pulls out a small automatic assault weapon.)

SCOUT #1
Now!

(#2 and Pita do likewise. The three of them spray the studio with bullets.)

#1 & #2 & PITA
Bangabangabangabangabanga!

(Slate has pulled his pistol but they fire at point blank range and Slate crashes to the floor. The Model also lies wounded. The Scouts stop shooting.)

SCOUT #1
(calling out)
Are you there?

A THIRD VOICE
(over microphone)
Yes. We have taken the booth and office areas.

SCOUT #1
Excellent. (to Woman) This organization is under arrest by Federal Officers. Your practice of luring customers to your intercouring narcotic center is at an end.

(#1 and #2 rush off. Pita, however, kneels beside Slate, who is agonizing over a chest wound. She cradles his head.)

PITA
From where do you know me?

SLATE
You. Your name. Is. Pita. Pita.

PITA
Yes.

SLATE
You. You.

PITA
Tell me please.

(He can't speak.)

PITA
Someone help me here! I need life support here!

SLATE
I. Remem. Remember. You. Inak. Inagua.

PITA
What is Inagua?

SLATE
Someone. Brought you. Here.

PITA
Yes.

SLATE
Who.

PITA
We were contacted. A woman who works for you told us.

SLATE
Diana.

PITA
I think so.

SLATE
(furiously struggling to get up)
She. She. Set us up. I will . . .

PITA
Help! He is dying!

SLATE
I will find. Diana. She.
(eyes widen with a new memory)
Terry. She. Terry.
(breathes harder, tries to rise)
I. Will. She.

PITA
Stay down, you are too weak. (calling off) Help here! (to him) What is your name?

SLATE
I.

PITA
Please. Hold on. Do not give up. Tell me what you remember. What is your name?

SLATE
My name. Is. My. Name. Is.
(He stops; stares; goes limp in her arms.)

PITA
Help! Help me here somebody! Quickly!

(Cub scout #1 runs on, kneels, checks Slate.)

PITA
Hurry.

#1
He is dead.

PITA
No.

#1
He is dead. What is wrong? Did you know him?

PITA
(stands, looks down at Slate)
I don't know.

#1
(checks inside Slate's pockets, finds ID)
Oh. I see. Our contact here told us to avoid this one.
(stands)
Oh well.

(Lights out.)

(In the dark, a woman's voice:)

VOICE

Simon?
Simon?

(Lights up on Slate in a cage-like cradle: a shopping cart, perhaps. Naked; curled up in a fetal position. Asleep. A woman -- Mother -- dressed in house dress and gingham apron, sits next to him rocking him gently back and forth.)

MOTHER

Simon?

(Pause. She rocks him. He opens eyes. Looks around, groggy. She smiles at him. His eyes and neck are weak. The beer belly is gone.)

MOTHER

Can you hear me?

SLATE
(mumbling)

Me?

MOTHER

Yes. Can you hear me?

SLATE

I can hear you.

(He tries to sit up: it hurts.)

MOTHER

Now now now. Be careful, Simon. You are not yet used to moving.

SLATE
(lies back down)

Where am I?

MOTHER

Yes now, rest. You are in a good place.

SLATE
(pause)
Heaven?

MOTHER
Better than heaven.

SLATE
Better?

MOTHER
(laughs gently)
Mmm yes. Home. You are home now.

SLATE
I am?

MOTHER
Mm-hmm.

SLATE
Where is home?

MOTHER
Oh now do not fuss. You were away for a time. But now you are back.

SLATE
Where was I?

MOTHER
You were getting all better. You had a teeny little bullet.

SLATE
I was shot?

MOTHER
A teensy bullet in your poor adorable cardiac organ. That is all.

SLATE
I had a bullet in my cardiac organ?

MOTHER
Mm-hmm. A teeny one.

SLATE
Was I dead?

MOTHER
You were away from home for a teensy while. But now we have reassembled your body and given you a brand new cardiac organ. Is that not nice?

SLATE
A new cardiac organ from where?

MOTHER

A willing donor.

SLATE

Someone else is dead?

MOTHER

No no no do not fuss. The donor is alive and happy, with an artificial cardiac organ.

SLATE

Someone else's cardiac organ is in my body.

MOTHER

Rest now. Rest now. It is your cardiac organ now. We have put you back together. You are a wonderful success. You are in wonderful health. We have even been able to exercise your muscles and blood vessels with electronic machines while you were away asleep. Your body is wonderful and your brain is shiny and clean.

SLATE

My brain is clean?

MOTHER

Oh yes, that is the most wonderful of all. Your brain was soiled, but we have scrubbed it clean.

SLATE

Who is we?

MOTHER

Why me, and all the rest, of course. Tell me: what do you think of your government?

SLATE

I think . . . I think . . . my government . . . protects me and serves my needs . . .
 (suddenly passionate)
 . . . and I will serve *its* needs . . . to the *best* of my *ability*!

MOTHER

Wonderful boy.

SLATE

(instantly weak again, and puzzled)

I do not trust what I think. Is this what I thought before?

MOTHER

Your brain was soiled before. You were employed by some bad people, who want other people to be bad with them. They vend forbidden substances to children at school, and they had soiled your brain, Simon. We had to scrub and scrub to make it fresh and clean.

SLATE

Why do you keep calling me that?

MOTHER

Calling you what?

SLATE

Simon.

MOTHER

Simon is your name. It is the name your mommy and daddy gave you. Simon Anthony Pierce. Do you remember that?

SLATE

My name was Simon?

MOTHER

Do you not like that name?

(Slate is silent, troubled.)

MOTHER

Well you do not need to like it, oh no you do not one small bit if you do not want to. Here: hold up your hands. Go ahead. Hold them up and look at them.

(Slate does; has difficulty opening fingers.)

MOTHER

Do you notice anything?

SLATE

No. I don't know.

MOTHER

Of course you do not. It does not hardly show. Your fingerprints have been changed.

SLATE

How?

MOTHER

Oh you have been asleep a long time. We have had time to change your hands and to visit some very large rooms with very large computers, and we have meddled with those very large computers, and would you care to speculate what? Simon Anthony Pierce no longer exists. Poor Simon Pierce was shot in the cardiac organ and killed. You are not Simon Pierce. You have no address. You have no mommy and daddy. You were never born. You do not have to be anybody you do not want to be. You are free to be whomever you choose.

SLATE

Why have you gone to such trouble?

MOTHER

Well why do you think, you silly boy? We have done all this because you are special. You are extremely special. And we have an extremely special job for you.

SLATE

A job.

MOTHER

Yes indeed. A special job.

SLATE

A special job. For one who is does not exist and therefore cannot be traced.

MOTHER

Oh you wonderful clever boy. For one who cannot be traced. And also for one who is small in stature. Are you not happy to be thus selected?

SLATE

I am . . .

(sudden passion again)

. . . ready as always to *serve* my *country*!

MOTHER

Wonderful boy.

SLATE

(puzzled again)

Did I used to say things like that?

MOTHER

Calm now. Here now.

(She has a tiny pill, opens his mouth and inserts it before he can react.)

SLATE

What was that?

MOTHER

Nothing.

SLATE

A drug?

MOTHER

No no. A distillate of sugar. Just candy, to make you content.

SLATE

Why?

MOTHER

You have a visitor.

SLATE

Who?

MOTHER

The donor of your heart is outside.

SLATE

He wants to see me?

MOTHER

Yes. Would you like that?

SLATE

I suppose. Bring him in.

MOTHER

One small word in advance, my wonderful boy. Your donor has an artificial cardiac organ, which is not easily accepted by the body's defense systems. Those poor small systems must therefore be suppressed. I am afraid therefore that your donor has no immune system, and must wear special protection against all normal bacteria and viruses.

SLATE

Hm.

MOTHER

Are you prepared?

SLATE

Yes. Certainly. There is no problem.

(The Mother rises, steps away into darkness.
Slate pulls himself up to a sitting position.
Enter Pita. She wears a seamless suit of silver
with a bubble-like helmet over her head. [In fact the
helmet is probably just a wire frame of the bubble.]

PITA

Hello.

SLATE

Hello.

(pause)

Have I seen you before?

PITA

Yes.

SLATE

I thought so. Your name is . . .

PITA

Pita.

SLATE

Yes. You were a cub scout.

PITA

Yes.

(Pause.)

SLATE

You gave up your cardiac organ?

PITA
Yes.

SLATE
Why?

PITA
The Chief Operative chose you for revival. It was partially my doing that you were killed by accident. And it happened that only my cardiac organ would suffice. Blood type and so forth.

SLATE
How do you eat?

PITA
I have filters and special liquid food.

SLATE
You have air filters as well?

PITA
Yes. No infective agents may come near me.

SLATE
I see. (pause) How does one touch you?

PITA
One does not.

SLATE
I see. (pause) I would rather be dead. (pause) I was dead for some time. It is not so bad.

PITA
I would rather you were alive.

SLATE
No one can touch you.

PITA
Neither could anyone touch you. If you were dead.

(Pause.)

PITA
We have one cardiac organ now.

SLATE
Yes.

PITA
That is a good thing.

SLATE
I suppose that is a good thing.

(pause)

PITA
You said something.

SLATE
What?

PITA
Before you were. Before you needed revival. You said you remembered me.

SLATE
From when?

PITA
I don't know. You said a name. Inagua.

SLATE
Inagua.

PITA
Do you remember?

SLATE
(thinks; then)
No.

PITA
Nothing?

SLATE
I don't know.

PITA
Do you have some memory of. Of what I was. Before . . .

SLATE
(squirming, uncomfortable)
I'm sorry. I don't . . . I . . . what . . . were . . .

PITA
Anything at all . . .

(Mother steps forward.)

MOTHER
Here now.

(She places a tiny pill in Slate's mouth, makes him swallow. He calms down.)

MOTHER

That will be all, Pita.

PITA

Yes.

MOTHER

Thank you so very much.

(Pita turns, steps away into the darkness.)

MOTHER

Rest now. Rest now.

(Slate lies down as if gently pushed; lies back; sleeps.
Over the loudspeaker, a man's voice.)

VOICE

Is there a problem?

MOTHER

(softly, gently, stroking Slate's head)

No no no. He will be fine. A momentary glitch.

(She pushes Slate off in his cradle.
Man's voice over loudspeaker.)

VOICE

Pita.

PITA

(steps forward into spot)

Yes.

VOICE

We think it is best if you do not see him again.

PITA

Yes.

VOICE

For his sake.

PITA

Yes.

VOICE

And for yours.

PITA

Yes.

VOICE

We have other assignments for you.

PITA

Of course.

VOICE

There is terrorist activity.

PITA

I see.

VOICE

In the sugar fields of Kahuku. You are already adapted to the tropical climate.

PITA

Am I?

VOICE

Yes. And Rosalya is still at large.

PITA

I see. (pause) I am ready as always to *serve my country*.

VOICE

Excellent. Swallow please.

(Pita pulls out a tiny pill, takes it and swallows.
Lights dim.)

(Lights up on Slate, swimming and floating about underwater. He wears diving gear and facemask. He does martial arts and other exercises as he swims.

Enter another diver, in facemask and gear. They speak underwater. Their speech is garbled and unintelligible; other actors hold up cuecards as supratitles.)

(SLATE)

Why have I been training underwater?

(DIVER)

You will come to understand. You have an assignment.

(SLATE)

That is very good. What is it?

(DIVER)

You will be given a packet. You will meet someone and give them the packet.

(SLATE)

What is in the packet?

(DIVER)

Do not stop to consider. Give the person the packet

(SLATE)

Will the meeting be underwater?

(DIVER)

No.

(Lights dim.)

(In darkness: the magnified sound of someone breathing as if through a tube. This sound continues throughout the scene.)

Lights up: in orbit above the Earth.

The following scene can be done with Bunraku-style puppets, manipulated from the back by puppeteers covered in black. The actor playing Slate, unmasked, manipulates his own puppet; other puppets are manipulated by performers in black with black masks or veils. They make the same motions Slate was making underwater. The performers also make noises for their astronauts: garbled, unintelligible voices of outer space radio, constantly interrupted by harsh static. Also a couple of slightly more intelligible voices over scratchy radio, speaking in the flat NASA style, unperturbed by any catastrophe.)

NASA

EVA commencing
Visual identification achieved
Commonwealth module in sight

(Enter Astronaut--Slate--floating through space with EVA cord.

Enter a 2nd Astronaut, floating toward Slate also with EVA cord. Slate pulls out small clear packet of white powder. 2nd Astronaut turns to extend glove.)

NASA

Distance ten meters
eight
five
individual docking underway
Transfer commencing
Transfer complete

(Slate extends packet to 2nd Astronaut. 2nd Astronaut takes packet, puts in pocket of space suit.
Enter a third Astronaut, with unusual spacesuit.)

NASA

Another operative
Where's he from
No visual identification
What country

Who the hell is that
What's he doing

(Slate sees, but cannot float fast enough to stop the 3rd Astronaut from coming up behind the 2nd, pulling weapon, cutting 2nd's airline. 2nd grapples, flails, dies, floats slack.)

NASA
(still flat and imperturbable)
Severed oxygen line
Operative in danger
Emergency
Houston, we have a problem
Air loss
Extreme air loss
nine fiver zero three
Life support failure
Our astronaut is in danger
Extreme danger
Intercourse
Houston do you copy

(3rd Astronaut slices open 2nd's pocket, takes packet. Moves toward Slate, who is weaponless. Slate tries some karate moves, but they are useless in space. The other is about to cut Slate's air line.)

NASA
Houston we have an emergency
Abort
Abort
Abort

(Alarms go off, but stop suddenly: all voices cease. 3rd Astronaut stops short, seeing Slate's face through the mask. Let's him go. Presses button on suit, moves away and off. Voices start up again.)

NASA
Stopping
Operative has stopped for reason unknown
Escaping
Where the hell to
What in the name of intercourse
Houston we have serious trouble
Mission aborted
Mission aborted
Mission aborted

(Slate floats in space as several alarms start shrieking. Lights out.)

(Lights up on Slate in chair, under interrogation by amplified voice.)

VOICE

You did not see the astronaut's face?

SLATE

No.

VOICE

Why was your oxygen line not severed?

SLATE

I do not know.

VOICE

This terrorist seemed to have that intention.

SLATE

Yes.

VOICE

At first.

SLATE

Yes.

VOICE

But then changed his mind.

SLATE

Yes.

VOICE

Why?

SLATE

I do not know.

VOICE

Did you have some arrangement?

SLATE

No.

VOICE

Then why were you spared?

SLATE
 I do not KNOW!
 (jumps up)
 I will answer no more questions! You answer me! What was I passing to the astronaut?

VOICE
 That is not your concern.

SLATE
 Who are you? Are you the Chief Operative?

VOICE
 I am . . . almost the Chief Operative.

SLATE
 I want to see the Chief Operative.

VOICE
 That will not be possible. Sit down and answer our questions.

SLATE
 I will answer no more questions until *mine* are answered. I want see the Chief Operative.

VOICE
 Swallow.

SLATE
 I will not swallow anything! I will take no tablet! I want to see the Chief Operative!

VOICE
 That will not be --
 (voices confer dimly; then:)
 The Chief Operative will see you now.

SLATE
 He will?

VOICE
 Do not make me repeat myself. Please make yourself ready. Stand please.

(Slate stands.)

VOICE
 Over and out.

(Behind him, enter a woman: Diana. She is dressed in a more businesslike manner now.)

DIANA
 It is time for us to talk, Simon.

(Slate whirls to see her; instantly leaps across the room at her with hands raised for karate attack; screeches to a

halt with hands poised to destroy her; freezes, staring at her. She has remained fearlessly still, gazing at him. Frozen pause; then:)

SLATE

Uh . . . have we met?

DIANA

I am a Chief Operative. My name is Diana. Do you recognize me?

SLATE

Nn no. I suppose not.

DIANA

Then perhaps your . . . precautions here are unnecessary.

(Bewildered, he relaxes his attack posture, steps away.)

DIANA

That is better. Is it not?

SLATE

I suppose.

DIANA

Now then. Your mission was a regrettable failure. This reflects badly on my status, and we must make another attempt.

SLATE

I accept no assignments until my questions are answered.

DIANA

You will do as you are instructed, my curious child. And yet, you are a valuable resource, upon whom much has been expended. I have therefore decided to find out if you are ready to take a more deliberate part in bringing about the future.

SLATE

What future?

(At Diana's signal, two functionaries bring on a large map of the world, dark on dark, no names or borders, just land masses spotted with many small points of light. The functionaries hold up the map -- or else wheel it into place and sit, taking notes on the conversation.)

DIANA

Do you recognize this map?

SLATE

It is the world, is it not?

DIANA

Yes. On this map do you notice the outline of countries?

SLATE

There are none.

DIANA

Exactly. Because countries are a thing of the past. All matters are global now.

(Functionaries speak mechanically, without looking up.
Slate and Diana do not seem to notice them.)

FUNCTIONARIES

Global.

DIANA

Do you see the lights on this map? Each one is a point of discontent in the world. Starvation, poverty, ethnic strife, all unhappiness and unrest. You see how widespread it is. We would like all those points of discontent to vanish. Would that not be a fine thing?

SLATE

It is a fantasy.

DIANA

Perhaps not. That astronaut you were assigned to meet.

SLATE

Yes?

DIANA

He was Chinese. Part of China's brand new space program.

SLATE

Why was I meeting someone from China?

DIANA

Because they want our product. Many nations want it. And we want them to have it.

SLATE

What product?

DIANA

S2

SLATE

S

DIANA

(smiles a little)

2. Have you heard the name?

SLATE

(thinks hard, then:)

I don't know.

DIANA

Poor confused boy.

SLATE

What kind of narcotic is it?

DIANA

It is not a narcotic. It is simply sugar, refined and condensed beyond what was previously possible. It is a scientifically designed substance which safely induces feelings of pleasurable contentment.

FUNCTIONARIES

Pleasurable contentment.

DIANA

In fact S2 is purified of its usual acidic element, and is therefore healthier than regular table sugar. S2 promotes neither obesity, nor tooth decay.

SLATE

Neither does heroin.

DIANA

S2 and heroin are very different.

SLATE

What is the difference?

DIANA

The same as between God and the Devil.

FUNCTIONARIES

God and the Devil.

DIANA

The methods and even the goals of God and the Devil are much the same, but God is all powerful and perfect, whereas the Devil is a stumbling incompetent who causes his own defeat as often as not. Heroin, like the devil, is primitive and unsuccessful. The pleasure it provides is outweighed by the agony and inconvenience. S2, like God, is perfect.

FUNCTIONARIES

Perfect.

DIANA

It does not cause pain, it does not destroy braincells, it is not addictive if used in moderation, it does not cause withdrawal as long as there is more of it. S2 is immaculate and all powerful, like God.

SLATE

Why does China want it?

DIANA

The rulers of China, like many others, have realized that their oppressive methods of population control -- soldiers and prisons and so forth -- are expensive and inefficient. They would rather

avoid the long, slow process of social and economic reform. Instead they have decided to take a lesson from the rulers of our country and consolidate their position by providing ongoing happiness and good feeling for all their people, regardless of poverty or social situation or personal tragedy. And how might they achieve that?

FUNCTIONARIES

Ongoing happiness.

SLATE

S2.

DIANA

Exactly. With every citizen taking S2, there will be no social unrest, no political unrest, not even family unrest because there will be no personal discontent. Everyone will be happy.

FUNCTIONARIES

Everyone happy.

SLATE

Will there still be starvation and poor people and so forth?

DIANA

Possibly, but if everyone is happy, truly happy, what will that matter? When everyone feels good, the world will be at peace. Tell me, Simon: is feeling good good?

FUNCTIONARIES

Good good.

SLATE

My mind gyrates.

DIANA

Of course it does. And now with new technology S2 can be digitally coded and broadcast via satellite.

FUNCTIONARIES

Broadcast.

DIANA

Some deprived populations will need to receive S2 through primitive channels, water supplies and so forth, but most of the world that matters will ingest S2 through physical contact with hand-held computer devices.

SLATE

It is unbelievable.

DIANA

Beautifully so, yet true. Through fingers and palms and ear canals a new epoch will come. The digital transfer will take place on a private space station owned by one of the new Russian trillionaires. That is where the packet was heading when your transaction was aborted. But we will succeed, and S2 will blanket the world from space.

FUNCTIONARIES

Digital transfer from space.

DIANA

If this is all so wonderful, who interrupted the transaction?

DIANA

There are some who refuse to grasp the world-altering value of S2. They want us to live in a world of unrest and unhappiness. You encountered one of them: a terrorist, we think, whose name is Rosalya.

SLATE

Rosalya.

FUNCTIONARIES

Terrorist.

DIANA

We do not know which of the many third world terrorist organizations she represents, but we are certain that she was responsible for the destruction of our facility at Masayu.

SLATE

(troubled, puzzled by partial memories)

Masayu?

DIANA

On the island of Inagua. A nuclear-powered S2 refinery. This terrorist Rosalya destroyed that plant, and she recently managed to destroy another S2 refinery at Kahuku. Some of our most valued operatives were eliminated. Including the donor of your cardiac organ, what was her name

SLATE

Pita.

DIANA

Pita, yes. Lost in the field, unfortunately, thanks to these godless terrorists. We only have one refinery left.

SLATE

Where is that?

DIANA

An underground installation. Do not worry: it is heavily garrisoned now. We do not know how Rosalya and her orbital terrorists gained access to the space shuttle, but she interrupted our delivery to the Chinese, so we are forced to find another venue for this transaction.

FUNCTIONARIES

Orbital terrorists.

SLATE

Is there no Central Intelligence for this?

DIANA

Our Central Intelligence only supports this sort of transaction when it provides revenue for their own covert operations. The exchange must remain highly classified for the time being. We are offering S2, at least this first one, for free, and we have one more opportunity.

FUNCTIONARIES

Free.

SLATE

When?

DIANA

An international summit conference in Florida, timed to coincide with another space launch. Many heads of state will attend, especially those from deprived countries. While the shuttle launches S2 to its destiny in space, smaller amounts can be passed to the heads of state.

SLATE

Presidents and so forth.

DIANA

Yes.

FUNCTIONARIES

Destiny in space.

SLATE

I am unaccustomed to such high-level transactions.

DIANA

You appreciate its significance. It is an operation which must be facilitated by specialists.

SLATE

I see.

DIANA

The material must be picked up from the underground factory, fortunately near the launch, then distributed to those delivering it at the launch site, and carried aboard the space shuttle. This must all be done by an operative who is a trained astronaut and who is also

SLATE

Untraceable.

DIANA

Clever boy. You are uniquely useful and well-prepared. I have been seeking and developing a cadre of special operatives. There is a place for you in this new order, if you so choose. Tell me: do you support the terrorist actions of Rosalya, or do you favor universal happiness?

FUNCTIONARIES

New order. Special operative. Universal happiness.

SLATE

(pauses)

Are you cleaning my brain at this moment?

DIANA

In no way. You have our word.

(At her signal, the functionaries leave quickly with map.)

DIANA

The choice is truly yours. We are merely inviting you to leave behind the lonesome world of childhood and belong, with us, to the future. A time when war will fade, as slavery has done, into a curious barbarism of the past. Borders disappear and the globe becomes one vast marketplace of happiness. Transformation fills the atmosphere. I buried my own past, along with several associates, because S2 is the future. It is not a drug. It is a calling. I have found my vocation here, Simon. Will you join me now of your own free will?

SLATE

(considers; then speaks thoughtfully, sincerely)

I am ready. As always. To serve.

DIANA

Ohhh that is excellent. Consider yourself accepted at last. You will never be alone again.

(At her signal, functionaries reenter wheeling a rack of fashionable men's suits.)

SLATE

Does this factory have a cover aboveground?

DIANA

Clever again. A 24-hour convenience store We will arrange a password for you.

DIANA

(musingly)

Incidentally: who is your friend?

SLATE

(stops; frowns, confused; closes eyes as with pain, leans toward her helplessly)

I beg . . . your pardon?

DIANA

Never mind. A pleasantry. The government is your friend, Simon. And shall remain so. For all time. Good luck.

SLATE

Where exactly is this underground factory?

DIANA

Orlando.

(Lights down as Slate is fitted with his suit.)

(Lights up.
Several people stand rigid, staring blankly.
They speak phrases continuously, sometimes loud,
sometimes inaudible. They are Goods.)

GOODS

I might make your headache better. I might not. Buy me.
I will make you beautiful. Buy me.
I will not fill you up. But I am handy. Buy me.
You will be loved. Buy me.
You will be free. Buy me.
I will distract you for a moment, but then you will remember. Buy me.
I am not what you want, but I am here. Buy me.
It is only money. Buy me.

(Clerk stands behind chair. Slate enters, wearing
a well-tailored suit of clothes.)

CLERK

May I get something for you?

SLATE

What flavors of coke do you have?

CLERK

(recognizing a code word, giving response)

We have no coke. We have chips.

SLATE

(completing code)

I always drink coke with my chips.

CLERK

(leaning forward, quietly)

Withdraw from our service machine. Use personal identification number 7990.

(Slate nods. All the Goods disappear, leaving
one machine standing and staring blankly.)

MACHINE

I am the fountain of comfort. I make your life possible. Without me you would be alone.

(Slate enters number; Machine beeps several times.
Behind Slate, the imagined walls disappear, along with
the Machine and the rest of the Convenience Store. The
Clerk pulls on a visored hood and thick rubber gloves

resembling those worn in nuclear power or toxic waste plants. He moves upstage to join several more people who appear, dressed similarly in toxic protection gear with hoods, garb, and gloves. They stand in a line facing downstage.

Slate turns to face them. One of them manipulates a pair of mechanical hands, in which is clipped a large plastic bag of white powder. The bag is swung over to dangle near Slate. Slate steps toward it, hesitates to take it.)

WORKER IN MASK

It is perfectly safe.

ANOTHER IN MASK

Laboratory tests have proven it.

ANOTHER IN MASK

Its radiation level is lower than root beer.

(Slate considers, then takes the bag. The rest of the workers nod, then turn and leave.
One Worker remains -- not the Clerk.)

SLATE

Will you require a receipt?

(Worker shakes head no.)

SLATE

This is all I need then.

(Worker nods head yes.)

SLATE

(a little puzzled)

Is there anything else?

(The Worker is silent. Looks around. Then pulls out an automatic weapon, aims it at Slate. Gestures him to raise hands, which he does. Gestures him to hand over the bag of powder. He holds it out. Worker steps forward to take it. Slate deftly pulls back, disarms the Worker, pulling his own weapon out.)

SLATE

You have had your last orgasm, Rosalya. Reveal yourself, if you please.

(Worker doesn't move. Then pulls off hood.
Underneath is Pita, with bubble helmet still in place.)

SLATE

Your are not Rosalya.

PITA

No. My name is Pita.

SLATE

I know your name. What are you doing here?

PITA

Pursuing the common welfare of humanity.

SLATE

You no longer stand ready to serve the government?

PITA

The government are intercouring excrements and they put excrement in my brain. They put excrement in yours. They will put excrement in everyone's brain if they are able.

SLATE

Was it you outside the space shuttle?

PITA

I used my top-security clearance to foil that attempt. I used the same clearance to infiltrate this refinery. Large chunks of this refinery will soon turn into pure energy.

SLATE

You work for Rosalya now.

PITA

Rosalya has taught me much.

SLATE

Has she cleaned your brain?

PITA

She uncleaned it. The intercouring excrements you work for sent me to execute rebels on sugar plantations. They seemed not to care that I grew up on such plantations. When surrounded with plantations workers, my brain saw through the cleaning it had been given. Rosalya chose not to eliminate me, but instead made me remember.

SLATE

Remember what?

PITA

The truth.

SLATE

What truth is that?

PITA

(pause)

You were someone before, too. They put excrement in your brain. Your name was Slate. Do you remember?

SLATE
No.

PITA
You had a lover who was killed. His name was . . . I do not remember his name. Maybe you never told me his name.

SLATE
My lover was a he?

PITA
Yes. They changed you to suit their needs. You told me all this in Inagua. Do you remember? Your former profession was--

SLATE
(stepping forward threateningly)
It does not matter what I remember.

(But his guard has dropped and Pita kicks his gun away, disarming him and grabbing up her own to aim at him.)

PITA
I'm afraid I may have to execute you rather than jeopardize my mission here.

SLATE
Which is to destroy this factory.

PITA
The explosives are in place. I have merely to decide whether to leave you here or not.

(Pause.)

SLATE
Why do you hesitate?

PITA
You remembered me. On Maui. When you were shot. You opened my memory. It is why I donated my heart to keep you alive. You were the only clue. Until later. Now I remember all.
(pause)
You and I were to have intercourse. Do you remember?

SLATE
No.

PITA
You have my cardiac organ in your breast. Do you remember that?

SLATE
Of course I remember that.

PITA
Will you listen to it? Your name is Slate.

SLATE
My name is Simon.

PITA
Slate.

SLATE
Simon.

PITA
Slate.

SLATE
Simon.

PITA
Slate Slate Slate Slate --

(Slate kicks up and disarms her, flings her to the ground, stands training his weapon at her.)

SLATE
My name is Simon. This factory will survive the day after all.

PITA
Not while I live.

SLATE
Then you must not live.

PITA
Go ahead then. Now. Now. You will not leave this spot while I live. Go ahead.

(Slate takes careful aim at her. Tries to pull the trigger. Closes eyes; trembles. His hand droops, lowering the weapon. Eyes still clenched shut:)

SLATE
We were . . . interrupted.

PITA
Yes.

SLATE
By a battle.

PITA
Yes.

SLATE
So we never had the chance.

No. PITA

(Slate lets his weapon drop to the floor with a clatter.
Pita rises, steps toward him.)

You remember my name. PITA

Pita. SLATE

Your lover's name. The one who died. Do you remember? PITA

No. SLATE
(pause)

Try. PITA

No. SLATE

Please. PITA

Terry. SLATE
(pause)

(Pita steps to him. Embraces him. He responds.
Pita pulls away. Removes her clear helmet.)

No! SLATE

Yes. PITA

There are bacteria here. SLATE

(Pita takes his hand, puts it on her breast.)

We cannot. SLATE

Stop then. Let go of me then. PITA

(They do not move.)

PITA

Doctors and surgeons do not know all. My cardiac organ tells me. I must touch you. I must be touched. Somehow it will be for the good. My cardiac organ tells me it will be for the good. You have remembered.

SLATE

I have remembered much. We must not do this here. Your mission . . .

PITA

My mission will wait. We waited before, and events overtook us. There is no waiting now. When the time is right, we will press the igniting button together.

(He touches her cheek with his hand; then touches his cheek against hers.)

SLATE

Your flesh resembles what a petal of rose must feel like, though I have never felt one. Your flesh is what a carpet of grass on a hillside must feel like.

PITA

The feeling this gives me is true. It cannot therefore be wrong.

(They embrace, slowly. He lifts her to carry her away.
Lights dim.)

(Lights up.
Florida.

Maybe we see the launch site. Maybe not.
Somewhere, with their backs to us, two huge men stand at microphones silently addressing a vast audience which we can't see. They are headless: bodiless suits manipulated by visible attendants. Their hands are huge. They take turns speaking, then wave their extended hands when done. We hear the rumbling roar of the audience rising and falling and the distant noise of unintelligible speeches.

OR: the two huge men could be smaller puppets, for the effect of distance.

Scattered about as guards are Cub Scouts with automatic weapons. Behind all, with back to us, is Diana, in uniform of scout leader. She watches speeches anxiously.

Over distant loudspeakers:)

ANNOUNCER

The President welcomes the Premiere of the Peoples Republic of China to celebrate the rebirth of the international space program and the reconquest of space!

(Renewed applause.
Enter another Scout leader.)

SCOUT LEADER

Where is he?

DIANA

He will be here.

SCOUT LEADER

He is late!

DIANA

He will be here. Swallow.

(Scout Leader takes a tablet, goes.
Enter Slate. He stands beside Diana for a moment before either speaks. She faces upstage. He faces downstage.)

DIANA

You are late.

SLATE
Yes.

DIANA
Some were concerned.

SLATE
Were you?

DIANA
No. Have you got it?

SLATE
(pause)
Pita is dead. (pause) Did you remember Pita?

DIANA
No. Have you got it?

SLATE
Pita was the donor of my cardiac organ.

DIANA
Oh yes. One of our operatives. We knew she was dead.

SLATE
You were mistaken. But now she is truly dead. She was a rebel operative. She was preparing to turn the factory at Orlando into pure energy.

DIANA
A turncoat. That is disturbing. There may be others at large.

SLATE
Very possible.

DIANA
You executed this traitor Pita?

SLATE
(pause)
She died of an infection resulting from exposure to air. And intimate contact. With another human.

DIANA
I see. It is well. She was unclean.

SLATE
She died coughing. In the arms of that human. Moments after they achieved orgasm.

DIANA
Have you got the packet?

SLATE

Her heart was sure that love would somehow prevail. Her heart was mistaken.

DIANA

Have you got the packet?

SLATE
(pause)

Yes.

(Hands Diana the packet. She opens it, tastes it. Whistles; hands the packet to a cub scout, who salutes and runs off.)

DIANA

That is well done. Your equipment is waiting. Are you ready to report for the launch?

SLATE

Hm. I learned much from Pita.

DIANA

(abstractly; concentrating on the two leaders)

Such as what?

SLATE

Her death was painful to me.

DIANA

She was unclean. She was from a small dirty nation. She was a traitor.

SLATE

Her death has made me free.

DIANA

Good.

SLATE

I have discovered that my life is more than mere survival. My life has purpose.

DIANA

What is that?

SLATE

To feel good. That is my purpose. To feel good and make others feel good.

DIANA

Hm.

SLATE

Her death felt bad, but the orgasms preceding it felt good. In this world of excrement, there is nothing else. Love. Revolution. Patriotism. All excrement. Pita's death showed me the only possible goal of life. To feel good.

(Applause. President and Premiere both wave. As they wave, the President reaches behind his back with a smaller ziploc bag in his hand. The Premiere reaches behind his back, takes it, secretes it in his own pocket. Diana, seeing this, joins the applause. The Premiere exits waving.)

ANNOUNCER

The President Minister of the Republic of Somalia!

(Renewed applause as another Head of State enters accompanied by attendant with small Somali flag. Somali Head of State stands next to US President, waves. US President pulls out another ziploc bag, hands it behind his back to Somali head of state. Somali head of state takes bag, exits waving.)

ANNOUNCER

The Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania!

(Renewed applause as another Head of State enters, with attendant carrying Albanian flag. Waves; gets ziploc bag from US president; exits waving.)

ANNOUNCER

The President of the Republic of Indonesia!

(Renewed applause; Head of State, attendant w/ Indonesian flag; gets bag from US president; exits waving.
During the following, other Heads of State enters with attendant, gets bag, exits)

DIANA

Our international market is now guaranteed.

(turns downstage)

I am glad for your discoveries. God means for us to feel good. God wants the world cleaned and good. That is why he frowns on sinners and backsliders who dirty the world and make us feel bad. From your words I can tell that you are truly one of the chosen.

SLATE

(nods)

It is all the excrement of cattle. But let them make their profits.

DIANA

These traitors and terrorists must be rooted out.

SLATE

Yes.

DIANA

This Rosalya now has security clearance because of that turncoat.

SLATE

Do not concern yourself with Rosalya.

DIANA

(warily)

Why should I not?

(Slate pulls out a red scarf -- Rosalya's -- and lets it flutter to the ground.)

SLATE

Rosalya is dead. I stalked Rosalya and executed her.

DIANA

How did you find her?

SLATE

I considered briefly uniting with these rebels.

DIANA

To infiltrate?

SLATE

No. For several moments, I was sincere. But with Pita's death, I came to understand much. The world must be delivered from sorrow. S2 will achieve that. S2 must be allowed thoroughly to penetrate the Earth.

DIANA

That is a fine philosophy.

SLATE

I thought you would appreciate it. So you see that, no matter what happens, I will carry on this work. Do you believe that?

DIANA

I do.

SLATE

No matter what happens, you may comfort yourself with the knowledge that everything I have told you is true. No matter what happens, you must know that I will carry on this work.

DIANA

(steps toward him; with tenderness)

We will carry on this work together. In truth, Simon, you and I do have history together

SLATE

Yes, I know. Incidentally: my name is Slate.

(He has drawn a weapon. The applause stops suddenly as he aims at Diana before she can react.)

SLATE

(calm)

Bang.

(She spins and falls, struggling to draw her weapon.)

DIANA
Little sodomite, little penis, I will--

SLATE
Bang.

(She stops moving her arm; lies helpless but conscious.)

SLATE
The proximity of death has returned my memory complete. For Terry:
Bang.
For Pita:
Bang.
For me:
Bang. Bang. Bang.

(Enter Scout Leader.)

SCOUT LEADER
The launch is about to take place! You must get into your equipment! Are you reporting for duty or not?

SLATE
I will report for duty at once.

SCOUT LEADER
(sees Diana's body)
What is that?

SLATE
Swallow.

(Scout leader takes a tablet and hurries off)

SLATE
Revenge feels good.
(pause)
Justice feels good.
(pause)
Terry was right.

(The sound of applause comes up again. Slate puts his gun away.)

ANNOUNCER
His Royal Majesty Monarch of the Kingdom of Bhutan!

(Slate turns upstage and starts clapping with the

rest as another Head of State enters with attendant, waves, gets bag, exits waving. Lights begin to dim.)

ANNOUNCER

The Prime Minister of the Republic of Tajikstan! The President of the Union of Myanmar!
The President of the Russian Federation! The President Pro Tem of the European Economic
Community!

(Enter Head of State with attendant; gets bag, waves; does not exit, but stands and waves. Slate continues clapping as the lights dim all the way to blackout.)

end act two
end S2